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R 181346Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5373
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 4131
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2533
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1645
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 1065
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2220
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 6351
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4540
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2561
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000787

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [CI](#)

SUBJECT: CHILE MEDIA REPORT - AUGUST 18

Leading Stories

1. Chile's Police Force officially supported the special unit agent indicted for the death of an indigenous activist in last week's clashes; new drop in stocks prices shakes global financial markets; President Obama's healthcare reform faces strong criticism in the United States.

U.S.-Chile

2. Short interview with U.S. speaker Doug Arent, Strategic Planning Director of Energy Analysis at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory(NREL) who is visiting Chile this week. Arent highlighted the numerous projects on energy efficiency in the United States and the advances given by the Obama Administration to the lab's research. (El Mercurio, conservative, influential, 8/18)

Local

3. President Michelle Bachelet enacted the new General Education Law (LGE) that modifies the highly criticized Education Organic Law (LOCE). The new legislation incorporates principles such as quality and equity in education, a comptrollership entity in charge of overseeing the use of financial resources, and new requirements for upholders. In spite of the consensus reached after over two years of debating, differences still exist. Few party members attended the ceremony. (El Mercurio, 8/18)

4. John Podesta, Director of the Center for American Progress, participated in a dialogue on progressive governments hosted by President Michelle Bachelet at La Moneda Palace. (El Mercurio, 8/18)

5. American wine consortium Constellation -owner of brands such as Robert Mondavi and Jack Rabbit-- seeks to enter the local market and use Chile as a platform to access other markets such as Colombia and Brazil.(La Tercera, 8/18)

Indigenous Mapuche Conflict

6. Sources at Chile's Police Force (Carabineros) high command gave official support to the special unit officer who was arrested and processed for the death of Jaime Collio, the Mapuche indigenous who died in a clash with the police last week. Police sources noted that the officer rolled on the ground several times while he was being shot with rifle shotgun pellets. (El Mercurio, 8/18)

¶7. Under Secretary of the Interior Patricio Rosende called on the Military Justice to speed up the probe on the death of the Mapuche who died in last week's clashes. Forensics ruled out that the activist had been carrying a rifle when he was shot to death. (La Tercera, conservative, independent, 8/18)

Easter Island

¶8. The group of approximately 50 Easter Islanders (Rapa Nui) who were blocking the airport in the island for the past two days withdrew from the landing strip after dialoguing with central government officials. Under Secretary of the Interior Patricio Rosende will travel to the island next week to discuss their demands of creating an immigration office to restrict the number of tourists- both Chilean and foreigners - who settle on the island. Reportedly, some have a criminal record and have altered peaceful co-existence on the island. There is also concern with the impact of tourism on the island's patrimony and environment; every year approximately 7,000 Chileans and 25,000 foreigners visit the island. (El Mercurio, 8/18).

Environment

¶9. The Organization for Cooperation and Economic Development (OECD) approved Chile's environmental policies and management, which is an important step in becoming a member. OECD Environmental Assistant Director Robert Visser noted that the institution has "a positive opinion on how Chile is complementing and planning all of the requirements." (La Tercera, 8/18)

SIMONS